PRESS COVERAGE OF THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF PRESIDENTS' WIVES: TRUMAN TO JOHNSON (1945-1968)

by

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This study investigated the descriptions the press gave of four Presidents' wives: Mrs. Truman, Mrs. Eisenhower, Mrs. Kennedy, and Mrs. Johnson. Articles in Newsweek, Time, McCalls, Ladies' Home Journal, and Good Housekeeping were compared as to the length of articles and the type of press coverage given to each first lady's personal appearance her first year and her last year in the White House.

The length of each article and the amount of each devoted to the first lady's personal appearance were measured in column inches. Comments on the personal appearance were categorized according to eleven "categories of press coverage."

The most evident difference was between the coverage given the first year and that given the last year. Of the thirty-six articles studied only two were published during a last year. The news magazines published more articles which were shorter but contained a larger percentage of fashion coverage than those in women's magazines. Twice as many articles were published about Mrs. Kennedy as about any other first lady. These articles were also longer and a larger percentage of each was devoted to fashion coverage.

It was, therefore, concluded that the first lady's personal appearance her first year in the White House is a topic of interest to the news media.

APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In this era of mass media, the press is an important social, economic, and political influence on American life. It serves as a regulating power, limiting or selecting the news that is presented to the people. Thus, the power of the press affects most aspects of society--including fashion. With such influence held by the press, people interested in fashion may benefit from a close look at the way in which the press works in the dissemination of fashion news.

In today's fashion world no one person, couture house, or manufacturer stands out either as a prime example or as a dictator of fashion. Many people of varying prestige serve modern society as examples of fashion. In the United States, the President's wife may serve as a fashion example because of the newsworthiness of her position as first lady and the subsequent news coverage she receives.

Studies have been made of the first lady's influence on fashion, but little research has been done on the descriptions the press has given of the first lady. Since she can serve as an influence on current fashion, she is important to people involved in the production, promotion, and merchandising of fashion goods. For these people, knowledge of the amount and the type of press coverage devoted to each first lady and the reasons why the coverage varies with each first lady would aid in their understanding of her influence.

The specific purpose of this study was to investigate the coverage the press gave of four Presidents' wives, namely, Mrs. Truman, Mrs. Eisenhower, Mrs. Kennedy, and Mrs. Johnson. Articles in Newsweek, Time, McCalls, Ladies' Home Journal, and Good Housekeeping were compared as to the length of articles and to the type of press coverage devoted to each first lady's personal appearance her first and last years in the White House.

Definition of Terms

Personal appearance refers to the written descriptions of the actual physical characteristics of each first lady, her clothing, and her accessories.

Categories of press coverage refers to a classification of the comments made in the selected magazines about the personal appearance of each first lady. The categories selected as representative of the comments include:

1. physical characteristics
2. color preference or color use
3. length of cut of garment
4. fashion knowledge
5. designer or store recognition
6. husband's influence on dress
7. her effect on the dress of others
8. money spent on clothing or personal appearance
9. timeliness of style; adherence to current fashion dictates

10. awards given for personal appearance

11. recognition by the public

Innate newsworthiness refers to one's having through personal attributes rather than position the quality of news; that is, the quality of being timely, important, and interesting.

II. RELATED LITERATURE

The dress of the Presidents' wives has often been used as an example of fashion in the United States. This fashion side of politics is viewed by the press as newsworthy and is often well covered in newspapers and magazines.

Literature related to this study was reviewed for background information. The more pertinent information was divided into four divisions: (1) influence of the press on fashion, (2) journalism devoted to women, (3) fashion influence of earlier first ladies, and (4) biographical data on the four first ladies studied.

Influence of the Press on Fashion

According to Anspach the central problems in fashion are the introduction, acceptance, and adoption of change.[1] For individuals to conform to the pattern of clothing behavior which has been deemed "fashionable," information on this behavior must reach them. Horn commented that all fashion information begins at the showroom of the designer and by means of mass media is communicated from there to a number of influential people. Each person, whether journalist or buyer, then exerts some influence in the promotion of styles that

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[1]Karlyne Anspach, The Why of Fashion (Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1967), p. xi.

finally reach the public.[1] Two functions are served by fashion promotion. First, it brings an awareness of new ideas to workers within the industry and thus, generates a similarity in style of all fashion goods for a season. Secondly, it stimulates "style consciousness" in the consumer. Acceptance of a style must come before the large scale buying that means turnover and volume to the clothing industry. "In this sense fashion promotion is more than a communication to identify style characteristics, it is a mass propaganda campaign to persuade."[2]

John Fairchild has stated that most designers admit that "the press can make, or break, fashion." Designers curry favor with the press, but privately complain that the editors are "incompetent, play favorites, and are badly dressed." In actuality, the fashion world needs the press and the designers realize that the only way clothes can be exposed to the public is for them to be worn, publicized, and advertised.[3]

Although fashion magazines are often criticized in the United States, John Hohenberg described them as "extravagantly admired abroad for their imagery and their originality." Furthermore,he stated that they are noted for their ability to sell anything, and

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[1]Marilyn Horn, The Second Skin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968), p. 190.

[2]Anspach, The Why of Fashion, pp. 187-89.

[3]John Fairchild, The Fashionable Savages (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1965), p. 114.

that fashion magazines are the "handsomest commercial ventures" of all magazines. It is their purpose to merchandise the output of the garment industry. In light of this purpose, they are seen as a vital necessity to the American garment and allied industries where approval means much and where silence can prove deadly.[1]

Garland viewed the fashion editor as the powerful possessor of two weapons: silence and space. A collection the fashion editor considers bad can be ignored and a collection believed to be good can be given the largest amount of space and priority in placement.[2] The conscientious reader may need to question the intent of the fashion editor if, as Marylin Bender of The New York Times has stated, free gifts or discounts influence what the fashion editor writes.

> In coordinating an outfit, a fashion editor is considering her assignment, which is usually to take a nondescript dress and give it impact in a photograph. Accessories can help to do this. But also fashion editors can get their own clothes at wholesale prices--or sometimes at no cost at all. They can afford to be as snobbish about shoes and handbags as an electrical appliance sales manager's wife is about her kitchen.[3]

Fashion news coverage has had an effect on many aspects of modern life. The increased speed of communication has led to the rapid dissemination of fashion knowledge, to the quickening change

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[1]John Hohenberg, The News Media: A Journalist Looks at His Profession (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968), pp. 62-63.

[2]Madge Garland, Fashion (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penquin Books, Ltd., 1962), p. 185.

[3]Hohenberg, The News Media, p. 185.

of styles, and to a worldwide similarity in styles.[1] The immensity of coverage has given the average American consumer a newly gained sophistication about national and international events.[2] She has become, as Ernest Dichter stated, the "world customer." She has broken national boundaries, both in mind and in fact, as communication and travel have expanded her world.[3] Fashion news coverage reflects the people of the time. It has become an integral part of news, not the endless descriptions of seams, fabrics, and details it once was. In the hands of skilled journalists, such as Eugenia Sheppard, it has become "snappy, biting comments about designers and who's wearing what . . . so alive that many men are included as readers."[4] Hohenberg has stated that fashion coverage has become of such importance, that in Washington, the women's pages rank second only to the front page, as the most carefully read part of each newspaper. Fashion comments are now recognized by men as the source of much of today's news.[5]

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[1]Mary Shaw Ryan, Clothing: A Study in Human Behavior, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966), p. 60.

[2]Ray Eldon Hiebert, ed., The Press in Washington (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1966), p. vi.

[3]Ernest Dichter, "The World Customer," American Fabric Magazine, LX (Spring 1963), 87-91.

[4]Fairchild, The Fashionable Savages, p. 110.

[5]Hohenberg, The News Media, p. 184.

Journalism Devoted to Women

From the beginning of American journalism, the feminine reader has been considered an important part of circulation figures. By 1852 it could be stated that, unlike British women of the same era,

> American women read newspapers as much as their liege lords. The paper must accommodate itself to this fact, and hence the American sheet involves a variety of topics and a diversity of contents . . . Our dailies have domestic habits. They possess the requirements of the family journal.[1]

American women also supported their strictly feminine magazines long before men became equally enthusiastic over their exclusive publications. The first women's magazine, Lady's Magazine, appeared in 1792; Esquire, True, and Argosy were not published until the 1930's. Lady's Magazine grew by 1830 into Godey's Lady's Book. With Sarah Hale as editor it printed stories, poems, and articles on fashion, cooking and sewing, but largely ignored social problems. This attitude on subject matter has not yet been fully abandoned by most magazines for women.[2]

John Hohenberg stated in his 1968 book that, despite a few serious articles and editorial discussions, few women's magazines seem to give any space to criticism that could be unsettling to large advertisers. Most publishers of such magazines

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[1]Frances Luther Mott, American Journalism (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1962), p. 304.

[2]Roland Wolseley, Understanding Magazines (Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1969), p.30.

set up a false front of public service, only attacking those subjects from which they are reasonably sure there will be no danger of a kickback. The issues of the day are seldom allowed to intrude on the "dreamy buy-buy mood" which is created for the average reader.[1]

Women can turn and have turned toward the discussion, opinion, and news publications for information on social and political problems, topics not covered in their "special interest magazines." But special interest magazines--women's magazines--rank among the most widely read magazines. By the turn of the century, feminine readership was such that Ladies' Home Journal with a circulation of 700,000 had the largest circulation of any magazine or newspaper.[2] Circulation has continued to increase until Ladies' Home Journal, McCalls, and Good Housekeeping, now each over half a century old, have circulation figures from five to eight million.[3]

There are several explanations for this feminine selectiveness of reading matter. Wolseley explained that this devotion to special interest magazines was due to their content. The traditional homemaker has more time for reading than men; she

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[1]Hohenberg, The News Media, pp. 63-66.

[2]Mott, American Journalism, p. 507.

[3]Wolseley, Understanding Magazines, p. 289; Hohenberg, The News Media, p. 61.

reads more fiction than men; and women's magazines have traditionally carried large amounts of fiction.[1] Another explanation is that a woman lives in two worlds: the one of practical things and reality, and the one of make-believe. In reality she is constantly interested in how to make herself attractive and acceptable as a good wife and mother. Fashion, cosmetics, health hints, and etiquette all appeal to her desire for beauty. In fantasy she wants stories or articles about fascinating and romantic characters with whom she can identify.[2]

As journalism entered the twentieth century an increased emphasis was placed on subject matter which would interest women. This new emphasis was not actually due to women's new found emancipation, nor to their growing importance in the business world, but to the growth of department store advertising. Advertising of this type and of items used primarily by women in the home caused newspapers and general interest magazines to make a concerted appeal to the woman reader.[3] Women's magazines today have been primarily responsible for the influence wielded by the advertising departments on homes and families of the middle class. They have, to some extent, standardized housekeeping tools, widened the variety of cooking, and popularized certain beauty techniques.[4]

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[1]Wolseley, Understanding Magazines, p. 289.

[2]Carl Warren, Modern News Reporting (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1959), p. 349.

[3]Mott, American Journalism, p. 509.

[4]Wolseley, Understanding Magazines, p. 380.

Hohenberg has stated that although a limited number of newspapers have attempted to revive women's pages into worthwhile media, magazines have the lead over the daily press as media for information and comment on women's special interests: "homes, fashions, domestic attitudes, arts and crafts."[1]

Fashion Influence of Earlier First Ladies

Throughout history clothes have been used to denote rank, feelings of superiority, and other attributes of the wearer. The personal clothing chosen by the governing group whether as camouflage for personal defects, as Louis XIII's peruke to cover his premature balding; as part of personal idiosyncrasies, as James I's over-padding for protection against stabbing; or as an element of political design, as Napoleon's attempt to glorify the French court by re-establishing the pre-Revolutionary dress, have been adopted by the people as style standards. In the United States, democratic ideals, governmental responsibilities, and age have limited the establishment of the President as a paragon of fashion. However, if his wife is much beloved by the public, has a distinct personality, or is readily identifiable to the public, she can exercise an influence on contemporary fashion.[2]

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[1]John Hohenberg, The Professional Journalist (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1960), p. 375.

[2]Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne Eicher, Dress, Adornment, and the Social Order (New York: John Eiley & Sons, Inc., 1965), pp. 348-54.

Beginning with Abigail Adams, forty-two women have been expected to maintain "elegance, taste, and tact" in their influence while in the White House. The President is somewhat prepared for the White House. As Perry Wolff stated, "No man has ever been elected who didn't want the job." But each man's wife was not raised to be the wife of the President. Most saw themselves as primarily wives and mothers, not as first ladies.[1]

The press has always shown an interest in the wives of the Presidents. In fact, it was a Washington correspondent, reporting the inauguration of President Rutherford B. Hayes in 1877, who first referred to the President's wife as the "First Lady."[2] With few exceptions, the reporting of the President's wife has itself developed into a traditional form. At the beginning of each Administration each first lady is automatically "gracious and modest." But, especially in most of the early reporting, to note any statement of opinion one had to read between the lines or wait until the next Administration took over. Then comparisons could be made by studying the remarks published in changes in the White House.[3]

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[1]Perry Wolff, A Tour of the White House with Mrs. Kennedy (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 164.

[2]Pauline Frederick, Ten First Ladies of the World (New York: Meredith Press, 1967), p. xi.

[3]Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 164.

According to Wolff, Abigail Adams, having spent a good deal of time at the Court of St. James, was recognized as an intellectual and a social leader able to insist that her rules of protocol be followed.[1]

Dolley Madison was an influence in the White House longer than any other woman. She served as hostess for Thomas Jefferson in 1801 and through his eight years as President, while her husband served him as Secretary of State. She then continued as hostess for her husband's eight years as President. "She was a force in the White House until her death in 1849. . ." She wore fashionable gowns and made turbans fashionable. Her dresses were elegant, but possible for others to copy.[2] On her last visit to the White House at eighty-two, she wore a décollete' gown to show that her arms and shoulders were still beautiful.[3]

Louisa Catherine Adams thought a great deal of propriety and form and was able to enforce what she thought was proper. Once, she even turned away a poor relative who came to dinner in trousers instead of the then fashionable knee breeches and silk stockings.[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 166.

[2] Ibid., p. 167.

[3] Ibid., p. 172.

[4] Ibid., p. 168.

Angelica Van Buren, daughter-in-law to Martin Van Buren, while she served as official hostess wore three feathers in a jeweled headdress. Although this fashion was copied by other ladies of the time, she saw to it that all had plumes slightly shorter than hers.[1]

Letitia Tyler, an invalid as a result of a stroke suffered a few years before John Tyler became President, appeared in public only once in the year and a half she spent in the White House. At the marriage of her daughter she did appear downstairs in a "perfectly faultless yet unostentatious dress."[2]

President Tyler remarried in 1844 nearly two years after the first Mrs. Tyler died in September of 1842. His new bride, Julia Gardiner, thirty years younger than he, gave the press much to write about. He was the first President to marry while in office and newspapers avidly printed stories about the "cosmopolitan belle and the aging President."[3] Notoriety in the press was not new to Julia. In 1840, she had shocked the well-to-do society of which she was a part by posing for a testimonial advertisement for

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[1]Charles Hurd, The White House (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1940), p. 114; Marie Smith and Louise Durbin, White House Brides (Washington, D.C.: Acropolis Books, 1966), p. 54; Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 171.

[2]Smith, White House Brides, p. 55.

[3]Amy La Follette Jensen, The White House and Its Thirty-Two Families (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1958), p. 65.

a New York department store. In this early example of class advertising she carried a placard on which was printed: "I'll purchase at Bogert and Mecamly's. . . .Their goods are beautiful and astonishingly cheap."[1]

For the eight months the second Mrs. Tyler was in the White House she attempted to make up for any lack of influence the first Mrs. Tyler had shown. Julia Tyler received in the Blue Room seated in an armchair placed on a slightly raised platform surrounded by twelve maids of honor all dressed alike. She initiated the tradition of having the Marine Band play "Hail to the Chief" whenever the President made an appearance and suggested that portraits of all the first ladies be hung in the White House.[2]

The Presidents' wives from Mrs. Polk, through Mrs. Taylor, Mrs. Fillmore, and Mrs. Pierce were pious, sickly, somber, and did their best to exert the least possible influence while in the White House.[3]

When Harriet Lane began to act as official hostess for her guardian James Buchanan she renewed the "Queen Fever" of earlier first ladies. A friend of Queen Victoria, she introduced Victoria's dress to society and set many fashions for Washington:

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[1]Smith, White House Brides, p. 65.

[2]Jensen, The White House, p. 67; Smith, White House Brides, p. 76.

[3]Jensen, The White House, pp. 69, 75; Smith, White House Brides, p. 56; Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 173.

lace berthas, lower necklines, and skirts that became fuller and stiffer. Her popularity was so extensive that songs, such as "Listen to the Mockingbird," were dedicated to her.[1]

Excluding a "social snip here and a column there," the first ladies were criticized only mildly while they were in residence, and suffered only by comparison after they had left. This was true until Mary Todd Lincoln became first lady. Vicious attacks against her began before she reached the White House, continued through her stay, and pursued her even after death. To the press and most Americans, she could not be excused for being provincial Midwest society, for her intense mourning for the son who died of typhoid, and for having relatives who were fighting for the Confederacy.

Above all, she was extravagant. She spent a fortune on clothes which neither she nor the nation could afford. Before Lincoln's re-election, she was in debt for over $27,000. Her worry was that if Lincoln would be defeated, the bills would be sent in, and he would find out about her over-indulgences.[2] These over indulgences caused the press to lash out:

> At the White House, a lonely man, bearing the Nations' fate upon his shoulders, lived and toiled and suffered alone. His wife during all the summer was at the hotels of fashionable watering places.

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[1]Jensen, The White House, p. 78.

[2]Ibid., pp. 84-94.

> Every railroad train that entered the city bore fresh troops to the Nation's rescue and fresh mourners seeking the dead. Through it all Mrs. Lincoln "shopped."[1]

Mrs. Lincoln's extravagance extended even to her selection of a mourning veil.

> I want the very finest and blackest and lightest long crepe veil. Please get the finest that can be obtained. I want a very, very fine black veil, round corners and folds around. . .[2]

Eliza McArdle Johnson, "ailing and elderly at fifty-eight" spent most of her time during her husband's Presidency knitting, reading, and sewing in an upstairs bedroom.[3]

During the Grant Administration, society writers increased in number and the society page became a leading department in newspapers. Magazines and newspapers described Mrs. Grant in "Lyons silk velvet, with high bodice trimmed with black lace and satin," or in "pink grenadine, with flounced over-skirt, hair ornaments of fresh flowers, and a diamond necklace." Public interest in her was such that newspapers could say of her receptions, "one day in each week of the season, from three to five P.M., the President's wife receives her critic--the public."[4]

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[1]Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 177.

[2]Ibid., p. 176.

[3]Jensen, The White House, p. 96.

[4]Ibid., pp. 104-5.

Mrs. Hayes, dubbed "Lemonade Lucy" because of her backing of the temperance movement, followed fashion by wearing a modified bustle, but could not allow her conservative self to wear "rats or puffs or purchased hair."[1]

The press converged on the White House when Grover Cleveland married a beautiful twenty-two year old, Frances Folsom. The couple exasperated the press with their desire for privacy. As the reporters armed with telescopes, pursued the couple to the Maryland countryside retreat named Deer Park, Cleveland retorted by calling the journalists "the Ghouls." Headlines proclaimed, "Mrs. Cleveland Fishes."[2] Frances Cleveland was so popular that the Marines had to protect her from her admirers. Her dresses caused the National Temperance Convention to issue to her a request that young women "refrain from wearing the décolleté style of dress because it is immodest and fraught with dangerous and immoral influences." She did not alter her dresses.[3]

Advertisers all over the country began to take credit--without Mrs. Cleveland's endorsement--for her beautiful complexion. The repeated use of her picture in advertisements without her approval, resulted in a bill being introduced in the House of

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[1] Ibid., pp. 114-15.

[2] Jensen, The White House, p. 134; Smith, White House Brides, p. 115; Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 182.

[3] Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 185.

Representatives on March 6, 1888, proposing to make it illegal to use the likeness of any female in public exhibition without her written consent. The bill was never passed.[1]

When Frances Cleveland adopted a new style of wearing her hair in a low knot on the nape of her neck, "seven out of every ten women in Washington copied her and the style has been adopted throughout the country." Wolff claimed that Cleveland was a popular President, but that his wife outshone him: "Grover Cleveland is the most popular person in the United States--with the exception of Mrs. Cleveland."[2]

By the turn of the Century, the press and the first ladies had worked out a calm relationship. The women no longer pretended to be "imperiously regal" and the press reported all as "eminently respectable."[3] Isabelle Hagner was the first social secretary assigned to a first lady. She served to insulate Edith Roosevelt from a news-hungry press. Mrs. Roosevelt was able to remain "the same calm, poised, smiling lady, charming everyone with her natural manner" through hundreds of social events. Her behavior was so flawless, that Archibald Butt, a Roosevelt aide, said of her, ". . . seven years in the White House without making a mistake."[4]

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[1]Smith, White House Brides, p. 116.

[2]Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 185.

[3]Ibid., p. 186.

[4]Jensen, The White House, p. 183.

When Theodore Roosevelt broke with the tradition of riding back to the White House with the incoming President, Mrs. Taft set a precedent for the wives of future Presidents by riding with her husband. For that occasion she was dressed in a costume of purple and mauve with an egret feather in her hat. Although a slight stroke forced her to relinquish her position as hostess to her sisters for a year, she did recover to help in a campaign to popularize Taft with an unfriendly press. Also she was responsible for the gift of two thousand cherry trees donated to Washington, D.C., by the mayor of Tokyo.[1]

The first ladies of the early twentieth century were more interested in exerting a political rather than a fashion influence. Mrs. Wilson served as a surrogate President while her husband was ill. Mrs. Harding tried to minimize scandals as she urged her husband on in politics. Mrs. Hoover's political accomplishments, her help as a linguist and philanthropist, and her interest in White House history were hidden by the Depression.[2]

When widowed Woodrow Wilson married Edith Bolling Galt the press covered the wedding thoroughly, although no reporter was actually admitted to the ceremony. The Washington Post was able to print an hour-by-hour schedule for both President Wilson and Mrs. Galt during the wedding day.[3]

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[1] Ibid., p. 192.

[2] Jensen, The White House, pp. 211, 215; Wolff, A Tour of the White House, p. 197.

[3] Smith, White House Brides, p. 52.

Mrs. Harding was very much a political influence on her husband. It is said that when the telegram arrived notifying Harding that he had won the Presidency she turned to him and said, "Well, Warren, I've got you the Presidency."[1] Mrs. Harding was described by the press of the time as "impeccably and fashionably dressed." She busied herself with trips to Walter Reed Hospital to visit the wounded veterans of the war and with constant appearances at public functions. She kept this pace until she became critically ill in September, 1922, with a kidney ailment.[2]

President Coolidge derived great pleasure from helping Mrs. Coolidge in the selection of her wardrobe. It took great tact on her part to keep his extravagant purchases of large hats covered with flowers and dresses loaded with beads and fringe out of her conservative wardrobe.[3]

Mrs. Franklin Roosevelt was an entity unto herself. The White House and its protocol did little to awe her. She was interested and active in politics. She lectured on the radio for pay, wrote the first commercially syndicated column by a first lady, and expressed her own and often controversial opinions.[4]

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[1]Hurd, The White House, p. 284.

[2]Jensen, The White House, p. 217.

[3]Ibid., p. 224.

[4]Ibid., p. 308.

She was wife, mother, politician, stateswoman, journalist, and first lady--all at once, and often at the same time." This activity caused an usher to remark when she left the White House, "this place needs a rest."[1]

After World War II, the increased speed of travel and communication, plus the advent of television, brought an increased sophistication to the American public. To this sophisticated public, television brought every public appearance of the first lady.[2] Molly Parnis, who has served as a designer for four Presidents' wives, stated that the need to establish a television image exists for each first lady. This image necessitates an awareness of "how clothes look in photographs, how they walk or sit down, or wrinkle, or whether the press might be critical of them."[3]

A new first lady's role can be difficult. As Mrs. Lyndon Johnson stated, the most difficult part of being first lady

> may be the feeling of being under scrutiny, when really you would prefer not to care if your hair is windblown or your dress is the one you wore the year before last. It is the public attention you don't particularly want--to be on stage, to be looked at."[4]

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[1]Wolff, A Tour of the White House, pp. 199-200.

[2]Lawrence Langner, The Importance of Wearing Clothes (New York: Hastings House, 1959), p. 241.

[3]Jean Wilson, "New Fashion Trends in the White House," Daily Times-News (Burlington, N.C.), Dec. 5, 1968, p. 1-C.

[4]Frederick, Ten First Ladies, p. 37.

Biographical Data on the Four First Ladies Studied

News coverage may reflect the innate newsworthiness of the person rather than the position she holds. For this reason, it is important before one makes a judgment about the press coverage a first lady received to know whether as a person she would have been newsworthy. Age, physical characteristics, personal appearance, family background, education, and personality all affect the newsworthiness of a first lady.

The biographical data chart that follows shows that there was nearly a thirty years difference in the ages of Mrs. Truman and Mrs. Kennedy when each entered the White House (Mrs. Truman was sixty, Mrs. Kennedy was thirty-one). This difference in ages would naturally affect the type of news coverage the media could give. Differences in family background, education, number of children, and public and private service, as shown on the chart, would add to the variance in newsworthiness of each woman during her stay in the White House.

Physical characteristics and the value one places on clothing affect ones outlook on fashion. A first lady would be less likely to serve as a paragon of fashion if her physical build would preclude the wearing of some fashion items or if she were devoted to a cause far removed from fashion. The less she can serve as an example of fashion, the less newsworthy she will be for fashion coverage. A

review of comments made in Current Biography at the time each woman was first lady will give further background into the newsworthiness of each first lady.

Bess Wallace Truman

"With her healthy complexion and blue eyes, Mrs. Truman, despite her plumpness gives a much more distinguished appearance in person than in photographs. She wears small modish hats over her grey waved hair and dresses inconspicuously, very often in blue or green . . . . The First Lady does not smoke and has often been praised for refusing cocktails in favor of tea or orange juice."[1]

Mamie Doud Eisenhower

"Since coming into the limelight, Mrs. Eisenhower has influenced fashions. Her short bangs have become a fad. . . Although she owns a few gowns styled in Paris or by leading American designers, the First Lady is known to favor moderately priced dresses and hats purchased in department stores. . . . In clothing as in decoration, pink is her favorite color. She is five feet four inches tall, weighs 138 pounds, has blue eyes, and brown hair tinged with gray."[2]

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[1]Anna Rothe, ed., Current Biography: Who's News and Why 1947 (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1948), p. 647.

[2]Marjorie Candee, ed., Current Biography: Who's News and Why 1953 (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1954), p. 182.

Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy

"Jacqueline Kennedy is five feet seven inches tall and has dark, chestnut hair and grey-green eyes. Her voice is often almost as soft as a whisper. . . . Ever since Kennedy was mentioned as a Presidential possibility, his wife has influenced fashions in clothes and hair styling. Imitators of 'the Jackie look' are legion, even though she has said, 'Being a fashion leader is at the very bottom of the list of things I desire.'"[1]

Claudia Taylor Johnson

"U.S. News and World Report has called her 'a careful, shrewd and very successful business woman, who ran a small investment up to considerably more than $6,000,000 in little more than 20 years.' Mrs. Johnson has dark brown hair and brown eyes, is five feet four inches tall and weighs 110 pounds. She wears a size ten dress and prefers bright colors. She follows, rather than sets, fashion."[2]

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[1]Charles Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook 1961 (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1962), p. 239.

[2]Charles Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook 1964 (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1965), p. 215.

TABLE 1

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

NAME	Bess Wallace Truman	Mamie Doud Eisenhower
YEARS IN WHITE HOUSE	April 1945 to January 1953	January 1953 to January 1961
DATE OF BIRTH	February 13, 1885	November 14, 1896
PLACE OF BIRTH	Independence, Missouri	Boone, Iowa
EDUCATION	Independence Public Schools Barstow School for Girls	Denver Public Schools Miss Wolcott's Finishing School
DATE OF MARRIAGE	June 28, 1919	July 1, 1916
CHILDREN	Mary Margaret (1924)	Doud Dwight (8-27-17--d.1920) John Sheldon (8-3-22)
AGE ON ENTERING WHITE HOUSE	sixty in 1945	fifty-six in 1953
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SERVICE	aided in haberdashery business Senate Clerk Red Cross work	military wife: twenty bases in thirty years

Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy	Claudia Taylor Johnson
January 1961 to November 1963	November 1963 to January 1969
July 28, 1929	December 22, 1912
Southampton, New York	Karnach, Texas
Chapin School (NYC) Holton Arms (Washington) Miss Porter's School	Marshall, Texas, Public Schools
Vassar (1947-1949) Sorbonne, Paris (1949-1950) George Washington University (A.B.)	University of Texas, Austin (A.B.)
September 12, 1953	November 17, 1934
Caroline (11-27-57) John Fitzgerald, Jr. (11-25-60)	Lynda Bird (3-19-44) Luci Baines (5-2-47)
thirty-one in 1961	fifty in 1963
Debutant of the Year 1947 "Inquiring Camera Girl" on the Washington Times-Herald	owner and director of a $6,000,000 television company active campaigner

III. PROCEDURE

The steps used in the collection of information for this study were (1) selection of articles, (2) measurement of linage, and (3) establishment of categories of press coverage.

Selection of Articles

The purpose of this study was to investigate articles in a cross section of popular interest highly circulated magazines. For this reason, articles in magazines with limited circulation, such as fashion or confession-romance type magazines, were excluded. Articles were selected from news magazines and from women's magazines. Two competitive news magazines, Time and Newsweek, were chosen to limit the effect political bias might have had on the coverage of the President's wife. Three women's magazines, McCalls, Ladies' Home Journal, and Good Housekeeping were studied.

In these five magazines, articles studied were limited to those published about the first lady during her first and her last year in the White House. Articles about Mrs. Truman, therefore, included those published between April 12, 1945, and April 1946 and between January 1952 and January 1953. Articles concerning Mrs. Eisenhower's personal appearance were limited to those published during 1953 and 1960. Articles, published during 1961 and from November 1962 to November 1963 which dealt with Mrs. Kennedy's personal appearance, were studied. Articles about Mrs. Johnson included those from November 1963 to November 1964 and those during 1968.

Articles in the selected magazines during the stated years which mentioned the personal appearance or a fashion trait of the first lady were studied. Excluded from the study were several articles about the first lady that did not mention personal appearance.

Measurement of Linage

In order to establish a means of comparing (1) the total amount of coverage each magazine gave to each first lady and (2) the amount of coverage each devoted to her personal appearance, the length of each article was measured in column inches. Column inches were used as the unit of measure, instead of word or sentence counts, since column inches is a method more representative of journalistic layout techniques. Pictures, drawings, and captions under such illustrations were excluded from the measurement. Secondly, lines devoted to comments about the first lady's personal appearance or fashion traits were marked, then measured. From these two figures the percentage of each article devoted to comments about the first lady's personal appearance was determined. Percentage figures were rounded to the nearest whole per cent to establish a figure for determining and comparing the amount of fashion coverage per article.

Establishment of Categories of Press Coverage

As a means for comparing the type of comments published about the first lady's personal appearance or fashion traits, eleven

"categories of press coverage" were selected. The eleven categories were:

1. physical characteristics
2. color preference or color use
3. length or cut of garment
4. fashion knowledge
5. designer or store recognition
6. husband's influence on dress
7. her effect on the dress of others
8. money spent on clothing or personal appearance
9. timeliness of style; adherence to current fashion dictates
10. awards given for personal appearance
11. recognition by the public

These eleven categories were designed to include most types of comments made by the press about the personal appearance of the first lady and served as a check list for each article. After each article had been measured to determine the linage, sections marked as fashion comments were reviewed and categorized. For this review an actual check list was devised whereby each comment was judged as to its most appropriate categorization, and a tally was made of the frequency of comments in each category on the list. In this manner, the variety of comments in each article was judged. Also, it was possible to make a comparison of the type of comments used by each magazine and a comparison of the type of comments made about each first lady.

IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings have been divided into three sections. Section one covers the similarities and differences in the descriptions of the Presidents' wives given by selected news magazines and selected women's magazines. Section two compares the descriptions given of each first lady by the press during her first year in the White House with those given during her last year in the White House. Section three includes a comparison of the amount of coverage and the "categories of press coverage" used in the descriptions of each President's wife: Mrs. Truman, Mrs. Eisenhower, Mrs. Kennedy, and Mrs. Johnson. The conclusion provides an analysis of possible explanations for the differences.

Coverage Given by Each Magazine

The first difference noted among the five magazines studied was the range in the number of articles published by a magazine about the first lady's personal appearance her first and her last year in the White House. Table 2 gives the number of articles published in each magazine. Of the 36 articles, 29, or 81 per cent, of the articles were in news magazines. Newsweek had the most articles, sixteen. Good Housekeeping had the fewest articles--only one, an article about Mrs. Johnson.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF ARTICLES STUDIED

FIRST LADY	Mrs. Truman	Mrs. Eisenhower	Mrs. Kennedy	Mrs. Johnson	Total
NEWS MAGAZINES					
Time	2	3	5	3	13
Newsweek	3	2	9	2	16
WOMEN'S MAGAZINES					
McCalls	0	1	0	1	2
Ladies' Home Journal	0	0	3	1	4
Good Housekeeping	0	0	0	1	1
Total	5	6	17	8	36

Table 3, Length of Article by Column Inches, compares the length of the articles. While the shortest article in the women's magazines was 62.63 inches long in McCalls; the shortest in a news magazine was 1.63 inches in Newsweek. The longest news magazine article was 81.50 inches long; the longest women's magazine article was 123.50 inches long. The news magazine articles were shorter

than the articles in the women's magazines, with only 5 of the 29 news magazine articles longer than the shortest women's magazine article.

From Table 3, one can also note that Time, Ladies' Home Journal, and Good Housekeeping did not publish an article about the first lady's personal appearance for any of the first ladies' last year in the White House. Newsweek and McCalls published one article each: Newsweek included one article concerning Mrs. Eisenhower's personal appearance her last year in the White House (1960) and McCalls published an article about Mrs. Johnson during her last year in the White House (1968).

Although the articles in the news magazines were shorter, they often devoted a larger percentage of each article to coverage of the first lady's personal appearance than did the longer articles in the women's magazines. Table 4 shows the percentage of each article devoted to fashion comments. The highest percentage of an article devoted to fashion coverage was 69 per cent in a Newsweek article about Mrs. Kennedy. The smallest percentage was the 1 per cent fashion coverage in a Ladies' Home Journal article about Mrs. Johnson. Time's coverage ranged from 4 to 12 per cent; Newsweek from 2 to 69 per cent. In the women's magazines: McCall's fashion coverage ranged from 5 to 12 per cent, Ladies' Home Journal's fashion coverage was from 1 to 5 per cent, and the one article in Good Housekeeping had 6 per cent fashion coverage. Therefore, Newsweek with an average

TABLE 3

LENGTH OF ARTICLE BY COLUMN INCHES

FIRST LADY	Mrs. Truman		Mrs. Eisenhower		Mrs. Kennedy		Mrs. Johnson	
YEARS	45-46	52-53	53-54	60-61	61-62	62-63	63-64	68-69
Time	6.00 6.38		63.50 10.13 12.00		81.50 24.50 15.75 24.00 11.00		15.63 9.88 73.13	
Total	12.38		85.63		156.75		98.64	
Newsweek	7.13 16.75 5.00		5.25	10.25	10.13 17.00 24.75 6.13 13.63 13.75 67.88 1.75 1.63		27.63 73.38	
Total	28.88		5.25	10.25	156.65		101.01	
Total News Magazines	41.26		90.88	10.25	313.40		199.65	

TABLE 3 -- Continued

FIRST LADY	Mrs. Truman		Mrs. Eisenhower		Mrs. Kennedy		Mrs. Johnson	
YEARS	45-46	52-53	53-54	60-61	61-62	62-63	63-64	68-69
McCalls			62.63					79.88
Ladies' Home Journal					97.5 122.00 123.50		123.00	
					343.00		123.00	
Good Housekeeping							63.00	
Total Women's Magazines			62.63		343.00		186.00	79.88
Total All Magazines	41.26		153.51	10.25	656.40		385.65	79.88

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF ARTICLE DEVOTED TO FASHION COMMENTS

FIRST LADY	Mrs. Truman		Mrs. Eisenhower		Mrs. Kennedy		Mrs. Johnson	
YEARS	45-46	52-53	53-54	60-61	61-62	62-63	63-64	68-69
NEWS MAGAZINES	Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent	
Time	4		5		7		7	
	4		17		4		3	
			3		2		10	
					43			
					5			
Average	4		8		12		7	
Newsweek	21		14	4	53		8	
	13				3		4	
	2				33			
					59			
					51			
					3			
					12			
					50			
					69			
Average	13		14	4	33		6	
Average for News Magazines	9		11	4	23		7	

TABLE 4 -- Continued

FIRST LADY	Mrs. Truman		Mrs. Eisenhower		Mrs. Kennedy		Mrs. Johnson	
YEARS	45-46	52-53	53-54	60-61	61-62	62-63	63-64	68-69
WOMEN'S MAGAZINES	Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent	
McCalls			12					5
Ladies' Home Journal					2 3 5		1	
Average					3		1	
Good Housekeeping							6	
Average for Women's Magazines			12		3		4	5
Average for All Magazines	9		12	4	18		6	5

coverage of 14 per cent, gave the most coverage per article of the first lady's personal appearance, while Ladies' Home Journal had the least coverage with an average of less than 3 per cent.

The similarities and differences in the categories of press coverage used by each magazine are not as evident as were the differences in the amount of coverage given by each magazine. Table 5, Frequency Distribution of Fashion Comments, shows that category #2, color preference or color use, was the most cited category in the news magazines: fifteen times in Newsweek articles, eleven times in Time. The second most frequent comment used by both magazines was category #3, the cut or length of the garments worn by the first lady. The least used categories were #6, husband's influence on dress; #8, money spent on clothing; and #10, awards given for personal appearance. Comments about the President's influence on his wife's dress (category #6) were made twice in Newsweek articles and twice in Time articles. Category #8, the money spent on her personal appearance, was used by Newsweek three times and by Time twice. Time mentioned category #10, awards for the first lady's personal appearance, only once (Mrs. Eisenhower). Newsweek mentioned category #10 in two articles, both were articles about Mrs. Kennedy.

In the two McCalls articles, one on Mrs. Eisenhower and one on Mrs. Johnson, comments about physical characteristics (category #1) were most frequent. In the four Ladies' Home Journal articles, three on Mrs. Kennedy and one on Mrs. Johnson, category #2, color preference

TABLE 5

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF FASHION COMMENTS

BY CATEGORIES OF PRESS COVERAGE

FIRST AND LAST YEARS COMBINED

FIRST LADY	Mrs. Truman	Mrs. Eisenhower	Mrs. Kennedy	Mrs. Johnson	Total
Newsweek					
1. physical characteristics	1	0	7	3	11
2. color preference or use	3	0	11	1	15
3. cut or length of garment	3	1	10	0	14
4. fashion knowledge	0	0	4	0	4
5. designer recognition	0	0	6	1	7
6. husband's influence	0	0	0	2	2
7. effect on the dress of others	1	0	3	0	4
8. money spent on clothing	1	0	0	2	3
9. timeliness of style	1	0	3	0	4
10. awards for appearance	0	0	2	0	2
11. recognition by the public	1	0	8	0	9

TABLE 5 -- Continued

FIRST LADY	Mrs. Truman	Mrs. Eisenhower	Mrs. Kennedy	Mrs. Johnson	Total
Time					
1. physical characteristics	0	0	3	2	5
2. color preference or use	1	3	5	2	11
3. cut or length of garment	2	1	5	0	8
4. fashion knowledge	0	0	4	3	7
5. designer recognition	0	0	2	0	2
6. husband's influence	0	0	1	1	2
7. effect on the dress of others	0	0	2	2	4
8. money spent on clothing	0	1	1	0	2
9. timeliness of style	0	0	4	1	5
10. awards for appearance	0	1	0	0	1
11. recognition by the public	0	0	4	0	4

TABLE 5 -- Continued

MAGAZINE	McCalls		Ladies' Home Journal		Good Housekeeping
FIRST LADY	Mrs. Eisenhower	Mrs. Johnson	Mrs. Kennedy	Mrs. Johnson	Mrs. Johnson
1. physical characteristics	2	3	1	1	0
2. color preference or use	2	1	4	0	1
3. cut or length of garment	1	0	4	0	1
4. fashion knowledge	0	0	1	0	0
5. designer recognition	0	0	1	0	0
6. husband's influenence	1	0	0	0	0
7. effect on the dress of others	0	0	0	0	0
8. money spent on clothing	0	0	1	0	1
9. timeliness of style	0	0	0	0	0

TABLE 5 -- Continued

MAGAZINE	McCalls		Ladies' Home Journal		Good Housekeeping
FIRST LADY	Mrs. Eisenhower	Mrs. Johnson	Mrs. Kennedy	Mrs. Johnson	Mrs. Johnson
10. awards for appearance	0	0	1	0	0
11. recognition by the public	0	0	0	0	0

or color use, was most frequently used. In the one article Good Housekeeping published about Mrs. Johnson's personal appearance, three comments were made, one each about her color preference or color use, the cut or length of her garment, and the money she spent on clothing.

Coverage First Year versus Last Year

A marked difference was noted in the press coverage given of the first lady's personal appearance her first year in the White House with that given during her last year in the White House. Of the thirty-six articles only two were published during one of the first ladies' last year in the White House.

Five articles were published about Mrs. Truman's personal appearance her first year in the White House. Seven years later, during her last year in the White House, not one article concerning her personal appearance was published in the five magazines used in this study.

Five articles were published about Mrs. Eisenhower her first year in the White House, while only one article was published her last year. The Newsweek article published her last year in the White House was longer (10.25 inches) than the Newsweek article published during her first year (5.25). The article the last year contained a smaller percentage fashion coverage: 4 per cent compared to 14 per cent in the first year article. Also, the article the last year contained no comment that could be included within the 11 categories of press coverage. The three-eighths of an inch comment dealt with her fondness for tinted gloves, but no definite color preference was stated.

Seventeen articles were published about Mrs. Kennedy's personal appearance the first year she was in the White House. None were published during her last year in the White House.

Seven articles were published about Mrs. Johnson her first year in the White House; one article, in McCalls, was published her last year. The percentage of fashion coverage (5 per cent) the last year varies only slightly from the 4 per cent given the first year: the 1 per cent in Ladies' Home Journal and the 6 per cent in Good Housekeeping. The McCalls article published during her last year was longer (79 7/8 inches) than the one in Good Housekeeping (63 inches) and shorter than the one in Ladies' Home Journal (123 inches). With only one article in each of the three different women's magazines, it would be difficult to state anything conclusive about the differences in the press coverage women's magazines gave Mrs. Johnson her first year and that she received her last year.

Coverage Given to Each First Lady

The most obvious difference in the magazine coverage of each woman's personal appearance was the amount of coverage: both in the number and the length of articles. Five articles were published about Mrs. Truman, six about Mrs. Eisenhower, and eight about Mrs. Johnson. Seventeen articles, or twice the number of articles published about another first lady, were published about Mrs. Kennedy's personal appearance. Mrs. Truman,

Mrs. Eisenhower, and Mrs. Johnson each had five articles about her personal appearance published in a news magazine. Time and Newsweek published a total of fourteen articles about Mrs. Kennedy. The women's magazines published no article about Mrs. Truman. However, they published one about Mrs. Eisenhower, three about Mrs. Kennedy, and three about Mrs. Johnson.

The length of the articles followed much the same pattern as did the number of articles. In the news magazines the longest article was one 81.50 inches long in Time about Mrs. Kennedy. Other than two items, each 1.75 inches long, about Mrs. Kennedy in Newsweek's news shorts section, the next shortest article was one five inches long in Newsweek about Mrs. Truman. The total column inches devoted to each first lady does not entirely correspond to the number of articles published about each first lady. The least total linage in news magazines was 41.25 inches in the five articles about Mrs. Truman. Mrs. Eisenhower received 101.13 inches of coverage in five articles. Mrs. Johnson received 199.73 inches coverage in five articles. Mrs. Kennedy's personal appearance received the most coverage with 313.38 inches in fourteen articles.

The women's magazines gave no coverage to Mrs. Truman. The one article published in a women's magazine about Mrs. Eisenhower's personal appearance was the shortest of the articles studied from a women's magazine. Three articles were published about Mrs. Kennedy and two about Mrs. Johnson. One article about each of these first ladies was 123 inches long, which was the most linage devoted to any single article. Mrs. Kennedy received a larger total coverage in women's magazines (343 inches) than did Mrs. Johnson (265.88 inches).

The largest percentage of a single article devoted to the first lady's personal appearance was 69 per cent in a Newsweek article about Mrs. Kennedy. The fashion coverage in articles about her in Time and Newsweek ranged from 2 to the 69 per cent, with an average of 12 per cent fashion coverage in Time and 33 per cent in Newsweek. No article about any one of the other three ladies contained nearly as large a percentage of fashion coverage. The average fashion coverage for Mrs. Truman was 9 per cent; for Mrs. Eisenhower's first year 11 per cent and for her last year only 4 per cent; and for Mrs. Johnson an average of 7 per cent fashion coverage.

The amount of fashion coverage in an article in a women's magazine ranged from a high of 12 per cent to a low of 1 per cent. The McCalls article about Mrs. Eisenhower contained 12 per cent fashion comments. The Ladies' Home Journal articles about Mrs. Kennedy averaged 3 per cent fashion comments. The article about Mrs. Johnson published in McCalls during her first year in the White House consisted of 4 per cent fashion comments and the article her last year consisted of 5 per cent fashion comments.

In the categories of press coverage it is more difficult to make a statement concerning the categories typically used in the descriptions of each woman. Categories two and three: color preference or color use and the cut or length of the garment, were used equally in the descriptions of Mrs. Truman. These comments typically stated that she was wearing a long sleeved black dress. Category two, color preference (pink), was used most often in the articles about Mrs. Eisenhower.

In the same manner that there were more articles about Mrs. Kennedy that were longer and carried a larger percentage of fashion coverage than about the other first ladies, so more comments and a greater variety of comments were used in the description of her. Color preference (twenty comments) and length or cut of garment (nineteen comments) were mentioned the most often. Husband's influence on her dress was the least mentioned category -- only one comment, in Time, that she stated she would wear muumuus if it would help him politically.

Mrs. Johnson's physical characteristics (five feet four inches tall and a size ten) were mentioned most often (nine times) in the articles about her personal appearance. Her husband's influence on her dress was mentioned three times and color preference or color use five times. President Johnson was very vocal in his objections to dull, or as he described them "muley colors."

Conclusions

As was stated in the findings, this study delved into the differences found in the magazine coverage given to the personal appearance of four first ladies. Differences in the coverage were found in three areas: among the magazines, between the first year and the last year in the White House, and among the four first ladies.

The most obvious difference was between the amount of coverage given of a first lady's personal appearance her first year in the White House and that given her last year in the White House. Of the

thirty-six articles studied, only two were published during a last year in the White House. Although it is true that before President Kennedy's assassination no one could have known that 1963 would have been Mrs. Kennedy's last year in the White House, why did the amount of coverage her last year (none) differ so much from her first year (fifteen in the five selected magazines)? If one can assume that the limited number of articles included in this study is typical, it would then seem that a first lady's newsworthiness for fashion coverage is limited to her first year in the White House.

In the coverage of a first lady's personal appearance typically given by a magazine, the biggest difference was between the two types of magazines, not between individual magazines. News magazines published twenty-nine articles; women's magazines only seven. Weekly publication aims at the immediate inclusion of high interest newsworthy items, such as current fashion comments. Monthly publication requires more planning, often as much as six months in advance, and requires an article of more lasting interest.

Although women's magazines have typically been concerned with fashion and beauty tips, news magazines devoted a larger percentage of each article to fashion comments. This fact could lead one to believe that fashion comments about these four first ladies were highly newsworthy items. With more space available in each issue, the articles in women's magazines were longer than most of those in news magazines. That these articles were longer may be a partial

explanation for the difference in the percentage of each article devoted to fashion comments. With more space available, the women's magazines could cover the same fashion comments as were considered highly newsworthy items by the news magazines and devote a larger percentage of each article to other aspects of the first lady's life. These other aspects would include those which traditionally appeal to women: the childhood, home, and children of the first lady.

Many explanations might be given for the differences in the coverage given to the personal appearance of each of the four first ladies. Mrs. Truman was the oldest of the four first ladies and the fact that she never actually enjoyed public life is well known. During her years as first lady, television was just beginning to make the first lady's personal appearance known to every American. For these reasons, it is understandable that the plump, sixty year old woman from Independence, Missouri, received the least magazine coverage of these four first ladies.

Mrs. Eisenhower entered the White House as the wife of an American hero. While President Eisenhower's and the grandchildren's activities received a great deal of news coverage, Mrs. Eisenhower did not seek or receive much publicity. She was not much younger than Mrs. Truman, fifty-six years old, and not in good health when she entered the White House. Her bangs became her most publicized contribution to fashion. The magazines investigated in this study, published one more article about her personal appearance than they published about Mrs. Truman.

For the fifteen years preceeding Jacqueline Kennedy's first year in the White House, the first ladies had presented a grandmotherly image to the American public. Mrs. Kennedy quickly changed that image. She was thirty-one, attractive and well educated in the arts, languages, and fashion. She bought from the best designers--American and European. She had an individual look which was quickly copied. She was part of the "Beautiful People" image and she was news. The articles in the five magazines reflect this newsworthiness; seventeen articles were published about her personal appearance compared to five about Mrs. Truman and six about Mrs. Eisenhower. Since there was much to discuss about her fashion image, a larger percentage of each article was devoted to her personal appearance.

Mrs. Johnson assumed a rather difficult role in having to follow the fashion image established by Mrs. Kennedy. Mrs. Johnson was fifty when she entered the White House. She had a good figure but was more interested in business than in fashion. The quick step from being little known as the Vice President's wife to being the first lady left little time for establishing a fashion image. She dressed well, but not in a highly newsworthy manner; half as many articles were published about her personal appearance as were published about Mrs. Kennedy.

It can be concluded from this study that the first lady's fashion newsworthiness is limited, for the most part, to her first year in the White House. It is therefore, perhaps, the newness of image which makes an impact on the fashion industry and the news media.

This impact of newness results in magazine coverage consisting of a greater number of short current fashion comments in news magazines, than of long fashion commentary in women's magazines. To the media, it is not solely the fact that a woman is the first lady, but whether she is also an innately newsworthy trend setter that determines the amount of magazine coverage devoted to a first lady's personal appearance.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the descriptions of fashion coverage the press gave of four Presidents' wives: Mrs. Truman, Mrs. Eisenhower, Mrs. Kennedy, and Mrs. Johnson. Articles in Newsweek, Time, McCalls, Ladies' Home Journal, and Good Housekeeping were compared and contrasted as to the length of articles and to the type of press coverage devoted to each first lady's personal appearance her first year and her last year in the White House.

Related literature dealt with influence of the press on fashion, journalism devoted to women, fashion influence of earlier first ladies, and biographical data on the four first ladies studied.

The steps used in the collection of data were the selection of articles, the measurement of linage, and the establishment of categories of press coverage. Articles were selected from the five stated magazines based on whether the article included comments about one of the four first ladies' personal appearance, either her first or her last year in the White House. Amount of coverage was determined by measuring each for the number of column inches in the article and the number of column inches devoted to the personal appearance; from these the percentage of the article devoted to the first lady's personal appearance was determined. Eleven "categories of press coverage" were selected. By means of a check list comments in each article were categorized. In this manner, the variety of comments in each article could be compared.

The differences in the coverage given by the magazines were more evident between the two types of magazines than among individual magazines. News magazines published 81 per cent of the articles studied. The news magazine articles on the average were much shorter than those in the women's magazines. Although the articles in the news magazines were shorter than those in women's magazines, they devoted a larger percentage of each article to coverage of the first lady's personal appearance. Differences in the categories of press coverage typically used by each magazine were not evident as the differences in linage. News magazines used categories #2 and #3, color preference or color use and cut or length of garment, most often. Findings were not as conclusive concerning categories typical of women's magazines.

The differences in the coverage given the first year versus last year were very evident. Of the thirty-six articles studied, only two were published during a last year. These two articles were one in Newsweek about Mrs. Eisenhower and one in McCalls about Mrs. Johnson.

The most obvious differences in the coverage given to each first lady were in the amount of coverage: both in the number and in the length of articles. Five articles were published about Mrs. Truman, six about Mrs. Eisenhower, and eight about Mrs. Johnson. Seventeen articles, or twice the number of articles published about another first lady, were published about Mrs. Kennedy's personal

appearance. The length of articles followed much the same pattern as did the number of articles. Also, the articles about Mrs. Kennedy contained the largest percentage of coverage devoted to personal appearance.

From the findings in this study it can be concluded that the first lady's personal appearance during her first year in the White House is a topic of greater interest to the news media than her appearance during the last year. News magazines gave more coverage to fashion comments than did women's magazines. The linage given to fashion coverage depended on the first lady's innate newsworthiness.

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